

**Madison County Planning Commission
Workshop Meeting
May 15, 2019**

The Madison County Planning Commission Workshop meeting was called to order by Chair, Carty Yowell, at 7:00m p.m. in the County Administration Building Auditorium. A quorum was established with all members present: Fay Utz, Pete Elliott, Peter Work, Nan Coppedge, Carty Yowell, Mike Fisher, Mike Mosko, Steve Carpenter, and Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch. Also present were Carol Davis, Assistant Zoning Administrator; Jack Hobbs, County Administrator; Sean Gregg, County Attorney; and Clay Jackson, BOS liaison.

Motion was made by Mike Mosko to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2019 meeting as submitted, seconded by Fay Utz, and carried, with all members voting aye.

Carol Davis presented the following cases:

Case No. SU-04-19-03: Howard request, tabled by the applicant.

Case No. SU-06-19-05: Request by Tyler W. or Heather N. Hochstetler for an indefinite special use permit to allow Middle Mile Infrastructure, LLC to construct a telecommunications equipment shelter for data transfer on 0.20 of an acre of land. This property is located at 2452 S. Seminole Trail (Rt. 29 Southbound Lane) near Oak Hill and contains 5.740 acres of land, zoned Business, B-1. There will be no plumbing in the building, so no Health Dept. action is necessary. VDOT had no comments at this time, but MMI is talking to them about the fiber optic cable in the VDOT right-of-way. John Tucker, Civil Engineer, was present to represent Middle Mile Infrastructure. Mr. Tucker did not have many answers to questions asked by the Commissioners. The building will be a 12' x 40' pre-manufactured structure with rock plaster siding. Mr. Tucker stated a lot of data centers like this are being constructed all over the country, and act as a booster station for fiber optic services, but will not offer any local service. Sean Gregg stated Section 8.1-4 of the Ordinance allows this for public service corporations. Mike Mosko suggested the applicant table the request since it is not currently allowed. Mr. Gregg suggested Mr. Tucker find out if Middle Mile Infrastructure is a public service organization, and if not, request to have the Ordinance amended, and then request a special use permit.

Mary Ann Hoffman and her husband live on Ruth Road on a 50 acre tract zoned Conservation, C-1. Mr. Hoffman is a commercial pilot, who has a small Highlander "bush" plane that he would like to be able to land on their property. An **airstrip** is allowed in Agriculture zones, but not Conservation zones. Mrs. Hoffman stated the plane would land on grass, never at night, and would have no FAA involvement. The owners could request the property be rezoned, or the Ordinance be amended, with accompanying fees charged. This matter was assigned to Fay Utz's Conservation/Agriculture committee.

Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch led discussion of **Goal 6 of the Comprehensive Plan relating to vocational opportunities with the high school**. She would like to see programs expanded, for students to become motivated and have exposure to what's available in the "real world." Mr. Gregg added that Germanna Community College also offers classes to encourage vocational training. Carty Yowell and Mrs. Seillier-Moiseiwitsch will meet with Assistant Superintendent Cathy Jones to explore the possibilities.

Fay Utz distributed new draft policy for **large scale solar energy facilities** representing the committee's continuing work and research. Article 14-17 would list the Purpose and Intent, Applicability, Conditions

(requirements needed before a special use permit would be issued, location/setbacks, safety/access, landscaping/appearance), and Decommissioning when the facility ceases to be operational. Chris Hawk referenced Chapter 32, 58.1-3229-3244 of the COV for Land Use Value Taxation. Peter Work asked if the committee had considered not doing anything or forbidding large scale solar energy facilities. Mike Mosko, Mike Fisher, and Steve Carpenter all reiterated this had been asked long ago, and the decision was made to proceed with developing policy to avoid the hasty reactions of other localities who were approached with requests (backed by large corporations); and to try to avoid the dilemmas other jurisdictions have faced by not being prepared. Questions and comments should be forwarded to Fay Utz. Orange, Spotsylvania, Culpeper, and Page Counties are all dealing with large scale solar energy requests and policy. Mrs. Utz summarized wanting the policy to protect the beauty of the land and the people in Madison; Pete Elliott responded with maintaining property rights.

Mike Fisher and Mrs. Seillier-Moiseiwitsch reported from the BOS meetings, and no new tasks were made of the Planning Commission.

There was discussion on **Goal 5-3 of the Comp Plan** which “encourages the development of . . . solar energy facilities . . .”. Given the current work on large scale solar facilities, Mike Mosko made the suggestion of adding “non-utility scale solar residential and business solar energy systems,” to have the Comp Plan and Ordinance in sync. There was general consensus, and we will aim to be addressed at the July Public Hearing.

Ways to **encourage public participation** was discussed. It is hoped to have news articles published in the *Eagle*, and will use the proposed Utility Scale Solar Energy policy as an experiment.

Nan Coppedge, Secretary

Approved

Certified